

Joe Hayes

From: B.R. Swenson [REDACTED]
Sent: Saturday, April 29, 2023 9:44 PM
To: Senate State Affairs
Subject: Public testimony for HB 23 Hearing May 4th

Chair Kawasaki, Vice Chair Claman, & Members Bjorkman, Merrick & Wielechowski of the Senate State Affairs Committee,

I reach out to you in support of recognizing October as Filipino-American History Month in Alaska. Filipino-Americans are a large part of the community where I've grown up and where I live in Alaska. Filipino-Americans, first and second-generation, have been my friends and co-workers throughout my life from elementary school to the present. In most jobs I've had, I've worked alongside Filipino-Americans. Indeed, we should honor and appreciate Filipino-Alaskans. I hope this bill is advanced through the rest of the committees this session.

When thinking of this bill, I think mostly of my friend, Maria Peralta. It's coincidental and very sentimental for me that her birthday is in October. She and I worked together for six-and-a-half years, laughing together, supporting each other and commiserating. She was everyone's work-mom. A major reason why I applied there was I saw her, a woman, in a management position and that made me feel more comfortable. She died eight years ago, over five days, from two brain aneurysms. I keep crying writing this. She was so well-known and well-liked that even customers missed her, asking about her for months.

~Beth Swenson
Kenai Peninsula Borough